Minutes for the East Montpelier Selectboard

DRAFT

January 22, 2024 East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting

This meeting was held in-person at the Municipal building with a remote participation option using the Zoom conferencing platform.

SB Attendance: Chair Seth Gardner, Carl Etnier, Zoe Christiansen, Town Administrator ("TA") Gina Jenkins

SB Remote Attendance: Chair Seth Gardner, Scott Hess

In-Person Public Attendance: Jim Barlow, Ross Hazel, Michael Duane, Tom Brazier, Nik Khosla, Sean Temple, ORCA Media

Remote Public Attendance: Alaina Smith, Deb Fillion, Rosie Laquerre, Daniel Costin, David Delcore

Chair Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Additions to Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Discussion with Town Attorney on Tax Appeal Hearing

Motion: To go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(F) – confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

The board entered into executive session at 6:37 p.m. and exited at 6:52 p.m.

No motion made.

Consideration of Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage

The board reviewed the Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage and made no changes. The Selectboard members in attendance will sign the form tonight with others later.

Discussion on Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Due to Expire December 3, 2024

TA Jenkins brought it to the attention of the Selectboard that the town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan expires December 3, 2024. The state has grant funding available to hire a consultant for the effort. TA Jenkins requested SB approval to move forward with the necessary paperwork to secure grant funding and issue the RFP to hire a consultant.

No motion issued. Consensus from SB to move forward.

Update on Special Joint Meeting with the Calais Selectboard to Discuss EMFD Budget and Agreement

An update of the January 15, 2024 joint meeting with Calais and EMFD was provided. It was decided at the January 15th meeting that EMFD would adjust the FY2025 EMFD budget to include $15,000 additional ambulance revenue. The impact of the decision is a reduction of $10,000 in the EM portion of the FY2025 ambulance budget.

Finalization of FY2025 Budget Development

The final budget was reviewed and approve by the Selectboard.

Motion: To approve FY2025 budget. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Mr. Hess. Passed unanimously.

Finalization of 2024 Town Meeting Warning

The town meeting warning was reviewed and approved with an amendment to add an article 3 to discuss the Town Garage Project.

Motion: To approve Town Meeting Warning with amendments. Made by Ms. Christiansen, second by Mr. Hess. Passed unanimously.

Finalization of Selectboard Report for 2023 Town Report

The Selectboard report was reviewed and approved with minor wording changes recommended.

Motion: To approve Selectboard Report for 2023 Town Report with amendments. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

Consideration of Culvert Engineering Design RFP Responses

The town received 2 responses to the RFP for culvert engineering at Sanders Circle and Sodom Pond Rd. Both bids are based on the hourly rates for the respective firms.

- DeWolfe Engineering Associates
- Dubois & King, Inc.

TA Jenkins and Road Foreman Perry suggested the town select DeWolfe for Sanders Circle and Dubois & King for Sodom Pond Rd.

Motion: To authorize TA Jenkins to contract with DeWolfe Engineering Associates for the Sanders Circle project and Dubois & King for the Sodom Pond project. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

Town Treasurer Report

The Selectboard reviewed the monthly financial report provided by Treasurer Pallas.

Appointments

The Energy Committee recommended Daniel Costin to fill the vacancy from Rick Barstow's departure. Mr. Costin has been attending meetings and confirmed his interest in being appointed to the committee.

Erin Borland has assumed leadership from Chris Racanelli of the town's Green Up Activities. It was requested that the Selectboard officially appoint Ms. Borland as the town's Green Up Coordinator.

Motion: To appoint Daniel Costin to the Energy Committee and Erin Borland as the Green Up Coordinator. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

Warrant: January 22, 2024 Expense Warrant

Motion: To authorize Mr. Etnier to approve the Warrant on behalf of the Selectboard. Made by Mr. Hess, second by Mr. Etnier. Passed unanimously.

Town Administrator Report

The decision was made to move the February 5th meeting to February 12th.

Conversation with Selectboard Candidates

The Selectboard met with Tom Brazier to discuss Mr. Brazier's interest in being appointed to the vacant position on the Selectboard.

Personnel Matter

Motion: To go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) – the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make a final decision to hire or appoint a public officer or employee in an open meeting and shall explain the reasons for its final decision during the open meeting. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

The board entered into executive session at 7:40 p.m. and exited at 7:54 p.m.

No action taken. TA Jenkins stated that the Municipal Coordinator had resigned as she is moving out of the area. The position will be posted to seek a replacement. The Municipal Coordinator will work through the month of March.

Conversation with Selectboard Candidates (continued)

The Selectboard met with Nik Khosla to discuss Mr. Khosla's interest in being appointed to the vacant position on the Selectboard.

Motion: To go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) – the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make a final decision to hire or appoint a public officer or employee in an open meeting and shall explain the reasons for its final decision during the open meeting. Made by Mr. Etnier, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

The board entered into executive session at 8:03 p.m. and exited at 8:18 p.m.

The decision was made to appoint Mr. Khosla to the vacant Selectboard seat as he brings a varied background and fresh perspective to the Selectboard.

Motion: To appoint Mr. Khosla to the vacant Selectboard seat. Made by Mr. Hess, second by Mr. Etnier. Passed unanimously.

Other Business

None.

Motion: To adjourn. Made by Mr. Hess, second by Ms. Christiansen. Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gina Jenkins.